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TO: Each Health Deputy *JEF/08*

FROM: Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H.
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SUBJECT: **HEALTHY FAMILIES AND KAISER PERMANENTE CHILDREN'S HEALTH
PLAN ENROLLMENT CAPS**

This is an update on important and imminent changes to available health coverage programs in Los Angeles County. Due to the State budget situation, the Healthy Families program is currently scheduled to close to new enrollments on July 17, 2009, if no other funding is found to fill the \$70 to \$90 million program shortfall. This means an estimated 6,000 children per month* in Los Angeles County will be placed on a Healthy Families "wait-list" and will be unable to enroll for coverage.

The Kaiser Permanente Child Health Plan is a health coverage program offered at reduced monthly premiums to families who earn less than 300% of the Federal Poverty Level and are not eligible for Medi-Cal or Healthy Families. However, due to capacity issues, this program will also close to new enrollments on July 17, 2009.

The enrollment cap on these programs will impede thousands of children in Los Angeles County from accessing continual health coverage. The local safety-net providers, including the Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) providers, the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) provider network, and the Department of Public Health (DPH) clinics, will be impacted by an increased workload due to these enrollment freezes. For example, the limited PPP services will have an increased utilization by children instead of indigent adults.

The Department of Public Health contracts with community-based agencies to provide outreach and enrollment services to assist families with finding health insurance coverage. These contracted agencies will continue to provide enrollment and referral services throughout in Los Angeles County by screening families for Medi-Cal, Limited-Scope Medi-Cal, Share of Cost Medi-Cal, and the local Healthy Kids program. The agencies will also appropriately refer children and their families to safety-net providers. Due to the current economic situation and as resources for regular medical homes continue to decrease due to program enrollment caps, it is important now more than ever to help families identify available options for health care services.

If you have questions or would like additional information, please contact me.

c: Cynthia A. Harding

* An average of 6,000 to 7,000 children in Los Angeles County apply for Healthy Families each month.